

**ABSTRACT**

A system and method of operation for a distributed media network and meta data server provides a low cost, efficient, reliable and versatile alternative to traditional media network systems. Multiple media data file servers are designated as primary or alternate data file servers for different media data media files. Related or linked media data files may be distributed throughout a media network which results in lower peak bandwidth usage at each media data file server. Each server in the distributed media network responds more quickly and efficiently due to its limited functionality and scope of media data files that it must server. Media data file servers transfer low bandwidth meta data to client devices allowing a significant increase in the number of clients which can simultaneously log in to a dedicated network server. The distributed system also provides media data owners with greater control over the media data files that they own by allowing the owners to encode, post or remove files from servers that they control and maintain. The alternate media data file servers of the distributed media network also can act as primary file servers during catastrophic errors of the primary media data file servers, thus resulting in a more reliable and fault tolerant media network.